Funds for development of tourism in Uttar Pradesh

†*425. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal for allocation of more funds for development of tourist places/places of pilgrimage of Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) The Department of Tourism, Government of India, received proposals from State Governments/UT Administrations every year for tourism related projects selected in consultation with them. Project proposals for the year 2002-2003 have not been received from the Government of Uttar Pradesh so far.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Proposals for 2002-2003 have not been received from the State Government as yet.

Diamond export

†*426. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have fixed target of 60 per cent share in the world diamond market by 2005;

(b) if so, the strategy adopted to achieve this target; and

(c) the new facilities proposed to be provided to the exporters in order to boost the export of diamonds and jewels?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c) As per the study conducted by

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council, Mumbai, (GJEPC), India has the potential of increasing its market share of export of cut and polished diamonds to 60% by value by the year 2005. The Medium Term Export Strategy of the Government for the year 2002—07 encompasses forging stretegic alliances with producers of rough diamonds and retailers of jewellery, encouraging forward integration into gemstone jewellery, hallmarking and certifying goods towards development of Indian brand in jewellery and developing market intelligence focusing on USA, Japan, France and on the NRIs.

In the Export-Import Policy effective 1st April, 2002, custom duty on import of rough diamonds has been reduced to 10% and licensing regime for rough diamonds has been abolished. Exploring direct procurement of rough diamonds from diamond mining countries is an ongoing exercise. Funds have been provided to create training infrastructure in the gem & jewellery sector by setting up an institute for jewellery design and manufacture under the auspices of the Indian Diamond Institute at Surat. To impart skills in designing in jewellery sector, Government has provided financial assistance to set up Indian Institute of Gem & Jewellery at Mumbai. For promotion of India's gem and jewellery abroad, publicity campaign, participation in international fairs, buyers and sellers meet are organised every year.

Interest rates on deposits in Urban Co-operative Banks

*427. SHRI YADLAPATI VENKAT RAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Reserve Bank of India has issued a directive to the Urban Co-operative Banks to slash the interest rates on deposits to the level offered by the commercial banks;

(b) if so, the rate of interest Urban Co-operative Banks were paying before the directive of the RBI; and

(c) what is the rate of interest of commercial banks at present?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) Urban co-operative banks are free to determine their rate of interest on term